

CHANGES IN THE AVIFAUNA OF LORAIN COUNTY, OHIO.

It is not my purpose to elaborately discuss the various changes which have occurred in the bird life of the county during its life as a county, nor even within recent years, but rather to notice some special features. In common with other parts of the eastern portion of the Mississippi Valley, as well as the Atlantic slope, and to a less degree other parts of the country, Lorain county has suffered the complete extinction of one or two birds, diminution in the numbers of some and the increase of others. In a region, the natural character of which has been so greatly modified as the Western Reserve of Ohio, from dense forests to relatively open farming land, it is doubtful if there are any species of birds which have not undergone some change in numbers or habits. But we are concerned with only the more striking changes.

EXTINCT SPECIES.

1. WILD TURKEY, *Melagris gallopavo*.—Formerly a very common game bird in the forests of the county, but it has long since entirely disappeared. A specimen in the Oberlin College museum was collected about 1858.

2. PASSENGER PIGEON, *Ectopistes migratorius*.—The immense flights of former years have given place to a condition of practical extinction. There is no recorded capture or occurrence within fifteen years.

DECREASING SPECIES.

Under this heading there should be grouped all of the Anseres, 23 species; Limicolæ, 18 species, and Gallinæ, 2 species, which are found in the county. The Woodcock and Bob-white are, however, on the increase, thanks to protective laws. Killdeer and Spotted Sandpiper are still common, but less so than six years ago.

SHORT-EARED OWL, *Asio accipitrinus*.—It was reported as a common resident eight years ago, by Messrs. L. M. McCormick and Geo. D. Wilder. I have seen but two individuals in the past six years, and those on the lake shore in March.

BARRED OWL, *Syrnium nebulosum*.—The steady decrease year by

year has been only too evident. This is due as much to the restriction of suitable nesting places as to the "man with a gun."

GREAT HORNED OWL, *Bubo virginianus*.—Eight years ago it was not infrequently seen in the deeper woods. I have not seen one for four years, and have heard of very few.

NIGHTHAWK, *Chordeiles virginianus*.—From common it has become decidedly uncommon; from what cause I am not able to state. It is seldom seen at all except in fall.

LONG-BILLED MARSH WREN, *Cistothorus palustris*.—The restriction of suitable nesting sites has nearly driven this wren from the county.

BLUEBIRD, *Sialia sialis*.—The recovery of this species from almost extermination in the winter of 1894-95 has been remarkable. It is not yet abundant, as it was previously, but is becoming so.

INCREASING SPECIES.

In these days of a gradual decrease in wild animal life as a whole it is a genuine pleasure to record the marked increase of a few species. A careful study of our records enables me to add a number of species to those given by Mr. W. L. Dawson on page 49 of the present volume. Mr. Dawson's list includes Baltimore Oriole, Cardinal, Orchard Oriole, Scarlet Tanager, Yellow-Breasted Chat, Bob-white. There are several species whose increase has been very apparent but no cause can be assigned. They are:

TURKEY VULTURE, *Cathartes aura*.—Always in evidence during the warmer months.

LONG-EARED OWL, *Asio wilsonianus*.—Usually either seen or heard in every moderately heavy woods, responding to an imitation of its notes.

RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER, *Melanerpes carolinus*.—In nearly every piece of woods, and even strays into town occasionally.

GREEN-CRESTED FLYCATCHER, *Empidonax vireescens*.—The increase in numbers during the past four years has been remarkable. Now every considerable woods boast its scores of pairs, where formerly it was scarce or absent.

GRASSHOPPER SPARROW, *Ammodramus savannarum passerinus*.—The first record of Mr. L. M. McCormick was May 30th, 1892. Since 1893 it has been one of the common birds of the fields.

LARK SPARROW, *Chondestes grammacus*.—Like the preceding, Mr. McCormick's first record is May 30, 1892. Since 1895 it has gradually increased, but has not yet become common.

CEDAR WAXWING, *Ampelis cedrorum*.—Formerly irregular, it is now a common resident. It was decidedly common during the past summer, nesting in orchards and in towns.

WILSON'S THRUSH, *Turdus fuscescens*.—During the last two summers it has nested rather commonly. Our records show that it is variable in this respect.

In the foregoing enumeration I have purposely omitted all species about which there might be a question, because of the greater amount of field work which it has been possible to do in the last four years than formerly.

It is my hope that more careful attention may be given to the actual numbers of individuals of the different species that are more common and more familiar, with the idea of furnishing exact data for comparison in years to come. We need to learn the effects of our civilization upon our environment.

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AN AFTERNOON AMONGST OLD SCENES.

Tuesday, September 13th, finds us once more walking through those favorite fields of the collector, which bound the Mississippi below the C. B. & Q. R.R. bridge, opposite Burlington, in Illinois,—our destination being Ellison Slough. The day is all that can be desired—bright, yet pleasantly cool.

As we push through the timber we note numerous feathered friends,—the Woodpeckers being perhaps the most conspicuous since they insist upon making their presence known by their loud notes. Next in point of noise, or perhaps I should have placed him first, is our garrulous Blue Jay, who is ever willing to let us know his whereabouts by some appropriate remark. Little fellows are now and then seen flitting among the taller elms and the Warbling and Red-eyed Vireos seem not to have forgotten their sweet cry, for ever and anon we hear one babbling to himself, no doubt recounting the pleasures of the past season. Even the cheery little note and bright gleam of the Redstart do not arrest our step,—but we do stop, just for an instant, yet long enough to add a Golden-crowned Thrush to our study series.

On we tramp, pausing to add a Tufted Tit to our bag, before we cross the trestle which spans Running and Prairie Sloughs. Here we admire the new club house and wish we might enjoy its hospitality and comforts